



Ron Sparks
Commissioner

STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND INDUSTRIES

Christy Rhodes
Press Secretary

January 7, 2005

P R E S S R E L A S E

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & INDUSTRIES KICKS
OFF PREMISES ID REGISTRATION AT CULLMAN
STOCKYARD**

CULLMAN – Commissioner Ron Sparks announced that the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries (ADAI) took the first step in establishing the new Alabama Premises Registration System this week at the Cullman Stockyard. Over 150 farmers signed up for the program that is designed to increase efficiency in identifying the origin and location of animals that are diseased or have been in contact with diseased animals. Emerging diseases such as BSE, commonly known as “mad cow disease,” and foot and mouth disease, have greatly intensified public interest in developing a national animal identification program. Alabama is one of the first states in the region to officially implement procedures designed to register premises as part of the national animal ID program to protect animal and human health. The program is intended to help Alabama livestock and poultry farmers to be proactive in protecting their animals, instead of waiting for the USDA to issue mandatory registration requirements that are expected in the future. “This program provides an efficient and straightforward process of identification registration that will prepare Alabama to protect the number one industry in Alabama, agriculture,” stated Sparks.

The long-term goal of the department is to work in cooperation with the USDA and the livestock industry to establish a system that can identify all premises and animals that have come in contact with a foreign or domestic animal disease within 48 hours. “This is a monumental but reachable goal,” stated Dr. Tony Frazier, State Veterinarian. “We are attempting to develop a practical yet comprehensive program that will protect the livestock, as well as farmers and consumers, in Alabama.”

The first step in the Premises Registration System is for farmers to fill out the two-page registration form. This information is then processed by the ADAI staff and the location will be given an alphanumeric ID number, which will be provided to the premises owner. Premises registration is simple, free, and voluntary. The form collects information such as location of the farm, owner of the property, and species type of the animals. It does not request production data.

The registration kick off was held at Cullman Stockyard because it has the largest livestock sale participation in Alabama. Over the next year, the ADAI will be visiting other locations throughout the state to encourage registration. Forms will also be available at other stockyards, vet clinics, county agent offices, and on the department website.

For more information on the Alabama Premises Registration System, please contact Dr. Tony Frazier at (334) 240-7253.

###

Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries Press Office
Richard Beard Building – Room 106 – 1445 Federal Drive - Montgomery, Alabama 36107
Christy Rhodes (334) 240-7103
For more contact information, visit our web site: <http://www.agi.state.al.us>